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ABSTRACT

Evaluation of prior learning for college credit towards a general studies degree is discussed in this handbook for faculty evaluators. It is suggested that the major responsibility of the evaluator is to determine if prior learning is college level and how many credits should be awarded. Credit toward the general studies degree is awarded only for baccalaureate-level learning and not for strictly vocational learning. The awarding of general credit under this program often designates that the learning is college level but does not fit traditional courses. Methods used by Adelphi College to determine the number of credits to be awarded are presented as guidelines for evaluators. General credit can be awarded for either lower or upper division. A description of vocations, lower division baccalaureate/associate degree, upper division baccalaureate, and graduate level work is included. The evaluator is free to use any means appropriate to determine if the prior knowledge is the proper quality and at a certain level of achievement. The process requires that faculty include a brief description of the evaluation procedures and criteria used. A series of sample guidelines for computing transfer credits, and copies of an evaluation form and a faculty utilization request are also included. (SF)

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D R A F T

Guidelines

for IUSB Faculty
regarding evaluation of prior learning portfolios.

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prepared by Ted Hengesbach

External Degree Programs x4464
July, 1979

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Persons interested in gaining college credit toward the Associate and/or Bachelor's of General Studies degrees prepare a "prior learning portfolio" which is then submitted to appropriate faculty for evaluation.

The portfolio that you may have on your desk now has been prepared according to guidelines and a format approved by the IUSB Extended Studies Committee. (A copy of the guide used by students is enclosed.)

Basically, the portfolio has these elements:

- 1) title page
- 2) table of contents
- 3) introduction
- 4) resume
- 5) one or several pages on which the person attempts to cluster related learning experiences according to traditional college areas of learning.
- 6) a request for credit which is the student's attempt to give his/her reasons why a request for a certain number of credits is justified.
- 7) the appendix which contains various items documenting learning.

This portfolio has been prepared in consultation with External Degree staff members and usually after participation in a portfolio preparation workshop. The signature of the staff person most closely involved in its preparation is found on the title page.

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The major responsibility of the evaluator is of course to assure him/herself that the learning is college level and that the number of credits awarded for this learning is consistent with the university's understanding of the meaning of a unit of credit.

In regard to the college level issue, the guidelines developed by the American Council on Education have been included in the Student Handbook with the notation that credit toward the General Studies degrees will be awarded only for baccalaureate level learning and not for strictly vocational learning. (See attached sheet.)

In regard to determining the number of credits to be awarded, the methods used by Adelphi University have proven to be of help (see attached sheet). These methods of course do not aid in the determination of the quality of learning that may have taken place but may help in the assigning of a particular number of credits that could be awarded after the learning has been judged to be college level by other means. The Student Handbook gives general information about these methods of computing numbers of credits.

Students are also asked to confer college bulletins for course titles and descriptions, to check representative textbooks and syllabi in order to develop a reasonable request for credit based on an understanding of what colleges consider to be baccalaureate learning and the number of credits assigned to various aspects of a particular body of knowledge.

Usually, the evaluator will be awarding General Credit--which designates that the learning is college level but does not neatly fit traditional courses because some portion may be lacking or the person's knowledge goes beyond a single course or relates to several offered by a particular department. General Credit is also a way of making clear on the transcript that the person's knowledge was gained outside university sponsorship.

However, the evaluator should feel free to award course specific credit if he/she judges that a person's learning is equivalent to the content of a particular course.

The enclosed green evaluation of prior learning form is the document used by the evaluator to record the result of his/her work.

Please note that General Credit can be either lower or upper division. The form also requests a brief description of the "evaluating procedures and criteria" used.

The evaluator is of course free to use any means appropriate to convince him/herself that the person's prior knowledge is baccalaureate quality and at a certain level of achievement.

The portfolio prepared by the student initiates the evaluation process. It is not meant and perhaps really cannot present the complete picture of a person's prior learning. Therefore the evaluator may request an interview with the student; further items of documentation; that the student take some paper-pencil or oral exams; or write a paper before the final evaluation and the award or non-award of credit is made.

The External Degree Program offers evaluators a stipend of \$13.00 for each hour of time spent in evaluation. Evaluators are appointed by the appropriate department chairperson and approved by the Divisional Chairperson, Dean of Faculties and Chancellor. (See attached "Faculty Utilization Request" form.)

We estimate that this evaluation time will usually be from 3 - 5 hours. If this is not sufficient, the amount of time can be renegotiated.

A copy of a booklet describing the External Degree Programs has been enclosed.

For further information, please contact Ted Hengesbach.

LEVELS OF LEARNING

1. Vocational: This category includes course work normally found in year-long certificate programs which are designed to provide students with occupational skills; in many two-year institutions, they are also found in curricula leading to associate degrees in technical programs. Course content is specialized, and the accompanying shop training emphasizes procedural rather than analytical skills.
2. Baccalaureate:
 - A. Lower Division Baccalaureate/Associate Degree. This category includes course work found in programs leading to the Associate in Arts, Associate in Science, and Associate in Applied Science degrees and introductory-level course work normally found in baccalaureate programs. Emphasis is on learning basic principles that have broad judgmental application.
 - B. Upper Division Baccalaureate. This category includes course work usually completed during the last 2 years of a baccalaureate program. The courses generally involve specialization of theoretical or analytical nature beyond the introductory level.
 - C. Graduate Degree. This category includes course work leading to a graduate degree. The courses tend to be oriented toward independent study, original research, critical analysis, and the scholarly and professional application of the specialized knowledge within a discipline.

The National Guide to Credit Recommendations for Non-collegiate Courses (1979 Edition). American Council on Education. p. xviii.

SAMPLE GUIDELINES FOR NONCOLLEGE TRAINING (Developed by Adelphi University)

The following methods are used to compute transfer credits:

Type I

Courses in which regular and substantive assignments were made to accompany work in class. (Theoretically our college courses expect two hours of homework for every hour in class; in practice there is no set amount.)

TO COMPUTE:

1. Take the number of hours actually spent in class.
2. Try to determine if the work was
 - (a) at a college level
 - (b) close to college level
3. For college level courses, divide the number of hours spent in class by 15. (At Adelphi, one college credit requires 15 hours in class; a three-credit course requires 45 hours.) For a course which was close to college level, compute using two-thirds the number of hours spent in class, then divide by 15 as above.
4. Round off to the nearest half. This completes transferable credit evaluation.

EXAMPLE (1)

Student takes a 12-week course (36 hours in class) in accounting. Course demands homework on a regular basis. S/he gets a certificate of satisfactory completion, but gets no grade.

Divide 36 hours in class by 15 = 2.4

Round off = 2½ credits transferred

EXAMPLE (2)

Student spends 36 hours taking a course in salesmanship and sales management offered by a large corporation. Course is substantive and requires assignments done out of class, mainly selling and practical exercises in the field and company offices.

We determine that amount and quality of work done is close to college level.

Take two-thirds of 36 hours in class = 24

Divide by 15 = $\frac{24}{15} = 1.6$

Round off = 1½ credits transferred

Type II

Workshops and practicums in which virtually all work is done during class periods.

These courses are evaluated as lab, studio, or field courses in which three hours in the field, studio or lab equals one hour in class.

TO COMPUTE:

1. Take number of hours actually spent in the workshop course
2. Divide by 45 ($1/3 \times 1/5$)
3. Round off

EXAMPLE

Student has 834 hours in instruction in radar and electrical engineering received through the Army.

Divide by 45=18.5 transfer credits.

INDIANA UNIVERSITY AT SOUTH BEND

EXTERNAL DEGREE PROGRAMS
IN GENERAL STUDIES

EVALUATION OF PRIOR LEARNING
(self acquired competencies)

TO: Director, External Degree Programs in General Studies

RE:

Name of Student

Soc. Security #

This is to certify that I have reviewed an application for credit for prior learning submitted by the student listed above. After thorough evaluation of this application, I am making the following recommendation:

1) Student's area(s) of competence:

2) Number of credits recommended:

_____ G299 (lower level general credit)

_____ G499 (upper level general credit)

_____ Other _____

_____ Total

3) Description of Evaluating Procedures and Criteria:

4) Length of Evaluation Time:

_____ portfolio assessment

_____ personal interview

_____ other

_____ Total

Signature and Title of Examiner

Date

INDIANA UNIVERSITY AT SOUTH BEND
EXTERNAL DEGREE PROGRAMS IN GENERAL STUDIES
FACULTY UTILIZATION REQUEST

TO: _____ DATE: _____

RE: Faculty Participation in Awarding of General Credits for
"Self-Acquired Competencies"

The External Degree Programs in General Studies would like to utilize the services of
_____ to assess "self-acquired competencies" as a
basis for awarding General Credit in Course(s) G299 and/or G499.

Name of Student(s) _____	Types of Competencies _____	Estimated # of hours of evaluation time @\$13.00 per hour
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Please indicate your decision by signing the appropriate space and checking the appropriate box below. If you approve, please forward this request to the next person on the list; if not, return to the External Degree Programs as soon as possible. Upon receiving the original form, this office will forward a copy for your records. Thank you for your assistance.

Theodore Hengesbach
External Degree Programs

_____ Department Chairperson	// Approve // Disapprove	_____ Date
_____ Divisional Chairperson	// Approve // Disapprove	_____ Date
_____ Dean of Faculties	// Approve // Disapprove	_____ Date
_____ Chancellor	// Approve // Disapprove	_____ Date

COMMENTS: